

[1 March, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

basic service (wireless) and cellular mobile service and 73 service providers were providing basic service (wireline). The quarterly PMR for the quarter ending 30.09.06 received from these service providers show that some of the service providers are not meeting the benchmarks for some of the parameters in some of the service areas.

(c) Following steps have been taken by the Government for improving the quality of telecom services:

- (i) Holding periodic meetings with the telecom service providers,
- (ii) Holding periodic meetings with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)/Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) and the private operators to facilitate provision of interconnection.
- (iii) Continuous efforts to co-ordinate and release additional spectrum from existing users.
- (iv) Pursuing with local authorities for expeditious clearance of cell sites.

Quirky roaming rates

280. SHRIDARA SINGH:

SHRI RAMDASAGARWAL:.

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that currently different operators levy different roaming charges in the country with 'quirky' roaming rates;

(b) whether Cellular Phone Users Association of India (CUAI) has pointed out this anomaly to TRAI;

(c) whether Government propose to direct TRAI to frame specific rules and regulations to fix the roaming charges when country's leading private cellular operator Bharti Airtel is reportedly having 123 per cent growth in quarterly net profit of Rs. 1,215.00 crore for the quarter ending December 31, 2006; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard and the steps taken to protect the right of consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (d)
The roaming charges levied by different operators have to be within the ceiling tariff prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). TRAI after consultation with all the stakeholders and in-depth analysis has prescribed the following revised roaming tariff which has come into effect from 15.02.2007.

- Rs. 1.40 per minute for outgoing local calls;
- Rs. 2.40 per minute for outgoing NLD calls;
- Rs. 1.75 per minute for incoming calls.

The other salient features prescribed while regional/national roaming are:

- No rental permitted in any form;
- No surcharge is leviable for any of the roaming services;
- No separate PSTN charges on roaming calls;
- Receiving SMS is free.

The revised tariffs are lower to the extent of 22% to 56% compared with the then prevailing market rates. This is in addition to the saving for the customers on account of abolition of rentals.

Increasing opportunities in IT, Bangalore

281. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the job market, the IT, Bangalore combo continues to be unbeatable;

(b) if so, whether for the January-March, 2007 quarter, Bangalore is expected to be the top hiring city and IT the top recruiting sector;

(c) whether the employment outlook continues to be positive (at the same level as the previous quarter) and reflects the increasing opportunities . for job seekers and the need for talent;

(d) if so, the total employment so far provided in this sector; and